

SOMERSET COUNTY.

Princess Ann, December, 1866.

REV. L. VAN BOKKELEN,

*State Superintendent Public Instruction, &c.,**Sir :*

I respectfully refer you to tables A, B, C and D of my statistical report, as affording a full and clear exhibit of our school work for the school year, ending June 30th, 1866.

These tables present in figures, "facts which are stubborn things," and which we desire shall speak for themselves. As yet, we have not done anything definite towards organizing the County High School—deeming it more expedient to defer action in this respect, until we shall have organized the Primary and Grammar Schools wherever needed in the County. When this is fully accomplished, and we find ourselves possessed of the necessary funds to organize the High School, it will give us much pleasure to do so at once.

"What action has been instituted to secure the continuance of the local tax for prolonging the school terms procuring necessary apparatus for efficient school work?" We caused to be published through the newspapers of our County a communication calling on the voters of our County, at the late election, to express their consent to a continuance of the local school tax, by endorsing on their ballots, "For a school tax." This communication appeared a few days, only, before the day of election, in consequence of my absence from the County, and there was not sufficient time for it to circulate, to any extent, among the people. The consequence was, but a small expression through the ballot box. So far, however, as that expression was obtained, it showed a very decided majority in favor of its continuance—the vote being four hundred and forty-nine in favor, and one hundred and fifty-seven against it. Since the election, I have been assured that those who voted against it, did so because they had it confounded in their minds with the tax for accumulating a school fund of six millions of dollars, which they were opposed to. In this view they regarded it as the imposition of a *new*, and not the continuance, merely, of the old tax.

"What are your resources for building school houses, or what plan do you propose as most likely to accomplish speedily this essential work?" In the month of August last, we had a special meeting of our Board for the purpose of considering and devising some plan for supplying the County